

65-6066

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

BUREAU OF THE BUDGET

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

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October 14, 1965

Honorable William F. Raborn
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Mr. Raborn:

Bureau of the Budget Circular No. A-71 provides that the Bureau of the Budget will "support the development and promulgation of standard data elements and codes in Government systems, when such data elements are in common use in some or all executive agencies."

A program for standardizing data elements and codes was initiated, beginning in April 1965, when three task forces were organized to develop and recommend standard data elements and codes for countries of the World and States of the United States including groupings and subdivisions of countries and States, and for nonpolitical places within those geopolitical entities. More recently, a task force has been organized to develop and recommend standards for reflecting the names of Government agencies in Government systems and standard codes to represent those names. The Civil Service Commission is currently engaged in standardizing data elements and codes for personnel management systems.

Consideration is being given to other data elements and codes in common use which appear eligible for standardization on a Government-wide basis. Certain of the groups being considered deserve high priority attention. We are at this time initiating action to establish interagency task forces to develop and recommend standard data elements and codes for three of these groups: (1) the coding of names of people and the use of numerical identifiers for people, (2) calendar dates, and (3) identification and coding of businesses. The remainder of this letter concerns one of the foregoing three groups.

The methods used for reflecting the names of people in our systems, including name-coding processes, and the numerical identifiers used to further identify people, e.g., social security number, case number, claim number, etc., should be considered for standardization. With the advent of electronic methods of data automation a trend toward coding names has developed. Also, the use of

numbers for identification of people, and the further use of these numbers for intra-system controls and inter-system data interchanges, are on the increase. It seems likely that a standard system for designating and coding names of people and for a standard numerical identifier of people would increase the efficiency and reduce the cost of Government systems and interchanges of data between systems.

The word "people," as used here, includes as a minimum (1) civil and military employees of the Government, (2) persons who receive, directly from the Federal Government, benefits from the social, welfare, retirement and veterans programs, and (3) persons other than the foregoing whose names are required to be entered in Government systems.

We wish to establish an interagency task force whose function would be to consider the procedures now in use for entering and coding the names of people in Government systems and for applying numerical identifiers to people, and then to develop and recommend (1) a name coding and numerical identifier system for standard use throughout the Federal Government and (2) a proposed plan and schedule for the adoption of the system recommended.

Virtually all Government agencies would be affected by the standard system which the task force will be asked to develop. It would not be practicable, however, for all agencies to provide a task force representative. Instead, we believe it a better plan to proceed with a relatively small task force that would consult with agencies which have a substantial interest but are not represented on that group. The standards and procedures developed and recommended by the task force will be circulated to all agencies for comment.

Following the plan described above, we are establishing a "Name Coding and Numerical Identifier Task Force" comprised of representatives of the following agencies:

- National Archives and Records Service, GSA (Chairman)
- Treasury Department
- Department of Defense
- Department of Justice
- Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
- Veterans Administration
- Central Intelligence Agency
- Civil Service Commission
- Housing and Home Finance Agency
- Railroad Retirement Board
- Selective Service System
- District of Columbia Government

If your agency will accept the membership and chairmanship arrangements we suggest, please designate a person to represent you on the task force. When all representatives have been designated, arrangements will be made to hold the first task force meeting at the Bureau of the Budget. This will enable our staff to brief the task force concerning the mission assigned and to relate the work to be accomplished to the total program for standardizing data elements and codes.

For further information concerning this matter, contacts can be made with Mr. William A. Gill, Bureau of the Budget, Executive Office Building, Room 552, code 128, extension 21311.

Sincerely,



Harold Seidman
Assistant Director for
Management and Organization